



P24194.A03

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants : Nobumasa SUZUKI et al.

Group Art Unit: 3732

Appln. No. : 10/659,297

Examiner:

Filed : September 11, 2003

For : ROD CONNECTOR

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RECEIVED

FEB 03 2004

TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

Sir :

In accordance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. §1.56, §1.97-1.98, and supplemental to the Information Disclosure Statement filed December 12, 2003, Applicants hereby call the following to the Examiner's attention:

Applicants submit herewith a copy of an European Search Report from the European Patent Office dated December 29, 2003, with respect to counterpart Patent Application No. EP 03 03 0810, in which the European Examiner cited the following documents:

U.S. Patent No. 5,584,831 to MCKAY, issued December 17, 1996;

U.S. Patent No. 5,545,167 to LIN, issued August 13, 1996;

Swiss Patent Publication No. 668 546 to JAQUET ORTHOPEDIE, published January 13, 1989. U.S. Patent No. 5,098,432 is a member of the patent family of this document;

European Patent No. EP 0 425 783 to SYNTHES AG, published May 8, 1991; and

French Patent No. FR 2 759 894 to KHARRAT KHALIL, published August 28, 1998.

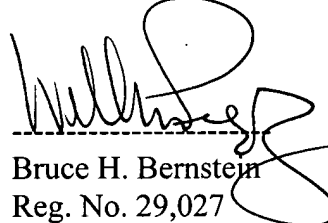
P24194.A03

The category of relevance, the particular portion(s) of the references that are considered to be relevant, and the claims of the corresponding European patent application to which the reference is considered to be relevant by the European Examiner, are as set forth in the European Search Report.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider and cite the above-noted documents. Copies of the above-noted document are attached and have been listed on a PTO-1449 Form which is also attached hereto. A copy of the European Search Report and the above noted patent family member are also enclosed. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to initial the appropriate spaces on the attached PTO-1449 Form and to return a copy of the Form to the Applicants with the next official communication in the present application to confirm consideration of these documents.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
Nobumasa SUZUKI et al.


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January 28, 2004
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Form PTO-1449

U.S. Department of Commerce
Patent and Trademark Office

Atty. Docket No.
P24194

Serial No.
10/659,297

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT

(Use several sheets if necessary)

Applicant
Nobumasa SUZUKI et al.

Filing Date
September 11, 2003

Group
3732

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

[illegible]

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

[illegible]

OTHER DOCUMENTS (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)

EXAMINER

DATE CONSIDERED

*EXAMINER: Initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.